DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 321 539 FL 018 625

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TITLE Great Opportunities for Optional Resources to Improve the Talents of Gifted Bilingual High School Students: Project GO-FOR-IT 1988-89. OREA Report.
INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, NY. Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Apr 90
GRANT G008710332
NOTE 28p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academically Gifted; Bilingual Education Programs; *Bilingual Students; Career Counseling; Curriculum Development; *English (Second Language); Extracurricular Activities; Federal Programs; High Schools; High School Students; *Limited English Speaking; *Native Language Instruction; Parent Participation; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Second Language Learning; Tutoring
IDENTIFIERS *Content Area Teaching; *Project GO FOR IT NY

ABSTRACT

Project GO-FOR-IT (Great Opportunities for Optional Resources to Improve the Talents of Gifted Bilingual High School Students) provided supplemental instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL), content area subjects, and Native Language Arts (NLA) to 259 gifted, limited English proficient (LEP) students at three Brooklyn (New York) high schools. At each school, bilingual educational enrichment centers offered guidance counseling, career and college advisement, parental contact, and tutoring. The project also organized education field trips and other extracurricular activities, and participated in the publication of several student magazines. Participating students were native speakers of Haitian, Creole, Vietnamese, Chinese, Spanish or Italian who had recently immigrated to the United States. They were chosen for participation in this project based on school records, personal interviews, and letters of recommendation from teachers and guidance counselors. Project GO-FOR-IT met its ESL, attendance, and parental involvement objectives, but failed to meet the objectives set for achievement in content area subjects. No data was submitted to allow evaluation of the projects success at meeting goals for curriculum/staff development. (JL)

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OREA Report

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPTIONAL RESOURCES
TO IMPROVE THE TALENTS OF GIFTED
BILINGUAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
PROJECT GO-FOR-IT
Grant Number G008710332
1988-89

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EVALUATION SECTION
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April 1990

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPTIONAL RESOURCES TO IMPROVE THE TALENTS OF GIFTED BILINGUAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

PROJECT GO-FOR-IT
Grant Number G008710332
1988-89

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GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPTIONAL RESOURCES
TO IMPROVE THE TALENTS OF GIFTED BILINGUAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
PROJECT GO-FOR-IT
1988-89

SUMMARY

- Project GO-FOR-IT was fully implemented. During the 1988-89 school year, the project offered gifted bilingual students instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), bilingual or E.S.L. content area subjects, and, when appropriate, Native Language Arts.

- Project GO-FOR-IT met objectives for E.S.L., parental involvement, and attendance. It failed to meet its objectives in the content area subjects. The project failed to report sufficiency data on curriculum development and staff development.

Great Opportunities for Optional Resources to Improve the Talents of Gifted Bilingual High School Students (Project GO-FOR-IT) was an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII-funded program in its second year. It provided supplemental instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), content area subjects, and Native Language Arts (N.L.A.) classes. The project served 259 gifted and talented students of limited English proficiency (LEP students) at New Utrecht, Sarah J. Hale, and Lafayette High Schools in Brooklyn.

The project targeted gifted and talented LEP students whose native language was Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Chinese, Spanish, or Italian. The project selected students on the basis of their status as recent immigrants, school records, letters of recommendation from teachers and guidance counselors, and personal interviews.

A bilingual educational enrichment center functioned at each site. These centers provided the students with guidance, counseling, career and college advisement, parental contact, and tutoring. The project organized educational field trips and other extracurricular activities and participated in the publication of a number of student magazines.

The project met its E.S.L., attendance, and parental involvement objectives. Project GO-FOR-IT failed to meet objectives in the content area subjects. It did not submit data for OREA to evaluate objectives in curriculum development or staff development.

Both staff and curriculum development appeared to be a weak component of the project.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- The project should consider modifying its objectives for staff and curriculum development.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII-funded project, Great Opportunities for Optional Resources to Improve the Talents of Gifted Bilingual High School Students (Project GO-FOR-IT). Project GO-FOR-IT functioned at New Utrecht, Sarah J. Hale, and Lafayette High Schools in Brooklyn. In its second year of a three-year funding cycle, the project provided supplemental instruction for 259 gifted and talented students of limited English proficiency (LEP students) who were new immigrants to the United States.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

Project GO-FOR-IT was created for LEP students who had difficulty with the English language because of their recent emigration to this country, but who had the potential to perform well in content area subjects. The project provided the students with individualized bilingual instruction and support services. A more detailed history as well as a description of activities and outcomes is given in the final evaluation report of 1987-88.

SETTING

The project functioned at New Utrecht, Sarah J. Hale, and Lafayette High Schools in Brooklyn. These schools are in neighborhoods that have experienced large waves of immigration over the last few years.

New Utrecht High School is in an area with a large concentration of Italian, Hispanic, Haitian, and Asian (primarily Chinese and Vietnamese) immigrants. The total school population for the year under review was 2,337.

Sarah J. Hale High School is in a primarily Hispanic and Haitian area and served about 2,000 students in the year under review. The school had recently been converted from a newspaper plant, and project facilities were cramped. The resource room was equipped with two computers available for student use.

Lafayette High School is located in a largely Chinese and Hispanic community with a small group of Haitians. The total school enrollment was 2,676.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

Project GO-FOR-IT targeted gifted and talented students who spoke Haitian Creole/French, Vietnamese, Chinese, Spanish, or Italian. Some had been educated in their native country, while others had little educational background. The majority of Chinese students were from rural areas where educational facilities were scarce. Approximately one-half of the students were over-age for their grade (see Table 1), and some students worked after school to supplement family income. In many instances both parents worked long hours and had difficulty attending school functions. The project attempted to provide babysitting services so that a family member could attend such functions.

TABLE 1

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade[a]

Age	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
14	1	3		1	5
15	11	8		1	20
16	12	22	15	1	50
17	5	14	19	13	51
18	2	10	24	25	61
19	1	2	10	27	40
20		1	6	6	34
21			4	6	10
TOTAL	32	60	78	80	250[b]
Number	20	27	44	39	130
Percent	62.5	45.0	56.4	48.8	52.2

Note. Framed area indicates expected age range for grade.

[a] As of June 1989.
[b] Data were missing for nine students.

• Over one-half of the students were over-age for their grade.

STAFF

The staff consisted of a project director, four resource teachers, and one paraprofessional. The project director, who was responsible for supervision of the project, had a master's degree and was fluent in Spanish and Italian.

The resource teachers' responsibilities were counseling and grade advisement, testing and placement of students, curriculum development, tutoring, family contact, computer-assisted instruction, and the provision of enrichment mini-courses. The resource teacher kept a folder on each student and met with them individually several times during the semester. Two of the resource teachers were employed full-time, two part-time. The resource teacher at New Utrecht High School held a bachelor's degree and was fluent in Chinese. The resource teachers at Sarah J. Hale and Lafayette High Schools were fluent in Spanish and held master's degrees. (Another resource teacher at Lafayette High School was fluent in Chinese and worked with Project GO-FOR-IT Chinese students but was funded by a different Title VII project.)

The paraprofessional provided tutoring and assisted teachers with in-class translations, grading, and test administration. He was employed full-time, held a B.A. degree, and was fluent in Chinese.

The director of the Office of Bilingual Education of the Division of High Schools supervised the project director. The project director and the site assistant principals supervised the

resource teachers. Depending on the site and the specific course, teachers of project students reported to the chairperson of the bilingual/E.S.L. department, the foreign language department, or the content-area department.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Students received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) and Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), and bilingual instruction in the content areas of mathematics, science, and social studies. Computer science and career education courses were provided in an interdisciplinary curriculum. Students took mainstream classes in music, art, and physical education. The project provided a bilingual educational enrichment center for support services at each of the high schools. The center provided students with guidance, counseling and career and college advisement, and offered microcomputers and software for curriculum enrichment. The project organized field trips and other extracurricular activities, including the publication of a number of multilingual student magazines.

REPORT FORMAT

This report is organized as follows: Chapter II outlines the evaluation methodology; Chapter III describes the project's implementation and evaluates the attainment of its students performance objectives; and Chapter V offers conclusions and recommendations based upon the results of the evaluation.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed two major areas: program implementation and outcomes. Evaluation questions included the following:

Process/Implementation

- Did the project select students for program participation according to specific criteria?
- Did the project conduct staff development activities?
- Did the project implement instructional activities for developing English language proficiency as proposed?
- Did the project implement activities for developing the content area skills of mathematics, science, and social studies?
- Did the project implement activities for parental involvement?

Outcome

- What was the average Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.) gain on the Language Assessment Battery?
- What percentage of program students passed their courses in mathematics, science, social studies?
- How did the attendance rate of program students compare with that of mainstream students?

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Sample

An OREA field consultant interviewed the project director, the four resource teachers, and the principal or assistant

principal at each site, and observed four classes. OREA provided a student data form for each participating student. Project GO-FOR-IT returned 232 completed data forms in the fall and 248 in the spring.

Instruments

OREA developed interview and observation schedules for the use of the field consultant and a questionnaire for the project director. Project personnel used OREA-developed data retrieval forms to report student demographic, attendance, and achievement data.

Data Collection

The field consultant interviewed school and program staff and observed classes over a four-month period from February to May 1989. OREA sent the project director's questionnaire and the student data forms to the project staff in January and April and collected them at the end of February and June.

Data Analysis

OREA used the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) to assess improvement in English proficiency. Project GO-FOR-IT students were tested at grade level each spring. Students' raw scores were converted to Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.) scores, which have multiple advantages over other scoring methods. They are standard, normalized, and form an equal interval scale. ("Standard" indicates that the unit of measurement is a fraction of the standard deviation of the original distribution of raw

scores; "normalized" refers to the fact that the scale is adjusted for the norm group so that its distribution has the shape of a normal distribution; and "equal interval scales" allow for legitimate aggregation or averaging of scores.) Project students' N.C.E.s indicated their standing in relation to the national average of 50.

To assess the significance of students' achievement in English, OREA computed a correlated t-test on LAB N.C.E. scores. The t-test determined whether the difference between the pre- and posttest scores was significantly greater than would be expected by chance variation alone.

To insure representative achievement data, OREA included only those students who had been in the program for at least five months and had attended classes for at least 100 school days. OREA extrapolated to estimate full-year scores of late-arriving and early-exiting students.

Limitations

Since all LEP students are entitled to receive bilingual and E.S.L. services, OREA was unable to select an equivalent control group. However, the use of two sets of data, as outlined above, served in lieu of a control group.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS: IMPLEMENTATION

Project GO-FOR-IT provided LEP students with intensive instruction in E.S.L.; N.L.A.; and the content area subjects of science, mathematics, and social studies, taught bilingually or with an E.S.L. methodology. Microcomputers were used for career education and computer science instruction in educational enrichment centers. The project offered E.S.L. and other classes to the parents and other adults in the families of participating students.

STUDENT PLACEMENT AND PROGRAMMING

Students were selected for participation in the program according to several criteria: scores below the twenty-first percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB)*, residence in the United States for less than two years, academic records from their native country that indicated above-average ability, and written recommendations from teachers and guidance counselors. Title VII project staff made the final selection through personal interviews.

The program placed students in content area courses taught bilingually or with an E.S.L. approach as appropriate, and in N.L.A. classes as needed.

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*The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) was developed by the Board of Education of the City of New York to measure the English-language proficiency of non-native speakers of English in order to determine whether they can participate effectively in classes taught in English. Students scoring below the twenty-first percentile on the LAB are entitled to bilingual and E.S.L. services.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project offered instructional activities in E.S.L., N.L.A., and the content area subjects of mathematics, science, and social studies.

English as a Second Language

Each school offered elementary, intermediate, advanced, and transitional levels of E.S.L. courses. New Utrecht High School also offered more specific remediation courses (advanced speech, and reading and writing) courses for Asian students.

The consultant observed a Chinese remedial speech class at New Utrecht High School. The students were looking over materials in preparation for the final examination--an oral presentation--taking place in the rear of the room.

Native Language Arts

Lafayette High School offered advanced levels of N.L.A. for Spanish and French-speakers and beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels for Chinese-speakers. New Utrecht High School offered N.L.A. courses for both native and non-native speakers in Chinese, French, Italian, and Spanish. Sarah J. Hale High School offered N.L.A. courses for native and non-native speakers in Spanish and French, as well as a special course in Spanish literature.

Content Area Subjects

Lafayette High School offered bilingual (Chinese) courses, including pre-engineering, and courses taught with E.S.L.

methodology in social studies and science. Sarah J. Hale High School had bilingual (Spanish or French) courses in social studies, computer literacy, and keyboarding, and E.S.L. science courses. New Utrecht High School offered bilingual (Chinese) social studies courses and E.S.L. science courses.

The OREA field consultant observed a global history class at Sarah J. Hale High School taught in English and Haitian Creole. The teacher began by asking the question, "Which of the following was the most significant in the victory of the Communists in China after World War II?" He wrote a list of possible answers on the board. He discussed the materials in English, then in Haitian Creole. Next, he asked the students to read, in English, their answer to the question. The teacher frequently asked a student to repeat an answer and make it a complete sentence.

The teacher then asked one student to respond to the question, "How did China become Communist?" The instructor wrote a number of responses on the board in English. After discussing each, he asked the class, in both English and Haitian Creole, to write a one-or-two paragraph answer to the question.

The field consultant observed a second class at Sarah J. Hale High School, a Spanish bilingual class in American history. The teacher began with a student's oral presentation, then asked the student to summarize his most important point. The student answered questions from other students. If the teacher felt that an answer was incomplete, he asked questions to elicit the answer. A heated debate took place between several students.

The teacher finally mediated the debate by supplying more information, and he pointed out how history can be distorted by oversimplification.

The OREA field consultant observed a Chinese bilingual global history class at New Utrecht High School. The teacher wrote a question on the board, "How did military alliances form in Western Europe after World War II?" and followed with a partial outline describing free world fears after World War II. He wrote student responses in Chinese, but spoke in English. The teacher then gave some background information on NATO and assigned homework.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular Activities

Project GO-FOR-IT helped students become familiar with American culture by providing them with activities like film showings and trips. Field trips included visits to the Natural History Museum, Lehman College, Long Island University, York College, and Bear Mountain State Park.

Project students could join a number of international clubs: the Spanish Club, Italian Club, and Oriental Club. The clubs celebrated cultural events (such as Chinese New Year) with shows, dances, and native food. At the end of the year, students were presented awards in French, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, E.S.L., and bilingual education at the Department of Foreign Languages award ceremony.

Sarah J. Hale High School students published an award-winning magazine that included student art and collections of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction by students in English, Spanish, and French. Lafayette High School published a student magazine entitled "It's a Small World," which also won an award. The magazine contained fiction, poetry, and non-fiction in English, Chinese, Spanish, and French. Sarah J. Hale High School had a special bilingual cosmetology class for hispanic students.

At Lafayette High School the resource coordinators offered enrichment mini-courses, including: An Introduction to Shakespeare, Modern European Painting and Architecture, and a Spanish film festival. Students were grouped according to English language ability and met once a week during their free time.

Staff Development

The program objectives for staff development were:

- Ninety percent of the program staff will demonstrate professional growth by completing and passing courses of study as indicated by college transcripts, and attending in-service training sessions as indicated by certificates and attendance records.
- Staff development will consist of regular scheduled workshops, undergraduate and graduate courses scheduled by the Director in conjunction with the staff at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

The project reported that staff members attended the annual conferences of the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) and the State Association for Bilingual Education (SABE) and the conference for Education of Asian students. Staff

members also attended 2 workshops on "E.S.L. Approach to Teaching" at Lafayette High School, and on a Plan Development Activity for E.S.L. classes. Project GO-FOR-IT did not report on university courses taken by the staff. Data was not sufficient to evaluate the staff development objectives.

Curriculum Development

The program objectives for curriculum development were:

- By the end of the second year, curriculum specialists will have developed four additional interdisciplinary subject matter-oriented and applied E.S.L. curriculum guides geared for the gifted and talented high school bilingual student in the eleventh and twelfth grades in mathematics, science, social studies or computer science as indicated by project-developed inventory.

- Project staff will have developed at least two appropriate testing instruments in the native languages of the project in order to properly identify and place the gifted and talented bilingual high school student, as indicated by project-developed inventory.

Project GO-FOR-IT did not provide the information OREA needed to assess the accomplishment of these objectives.

Parental Involvement

The program objectives for parental involvement were:

- Parents of target students will demonstrate more parental involvement than parents of mainstream students by demonstrating a ten-to-15-percent higher attendance at school functions, comparing tabulation of attendance of program and mainstream parents at school functions as indicated by school records.

- Parents and adult siblings of project students will be offered training in E.S.L. and methodologies on how to help the gifted and talented bilingual high school student.

The project provided babysitting services to enable parents to participate in the activities it offered to them. New Utrecht High School offered E.S.L. classes to teach parents basic English skills and to discuss parental involvement. These classes met twice a week in the evening; 17 parents attended.

Sarah J. Hale High School offered program students' parents access to evening E.S.L. classes run by a school staff member at a nearby church. The school also held parental leadership sessions every other month. Attendance of program parents was far better than that of non-program parents. The resource teacher met frequently with a number of parents, helping them to contact the federal amnesty program for illegal aliens.

Lafayette High School held a meeting for the parents of students in Project AMERICA and Project GO-FOR-IT. The principal, project director, resource teachers, and nine parents attended. One parent noted that this helped him better understand the programs, that he liked the school very much, and that he would advise friends coming from China to enroll their children in the programs.

Project GO-FOR-IT met both its parental involvement objectives.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS: OUTCOME

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

English as a Second Language

The evaluation objective for English language development was:

- Eighty-five percent of all targeted students will demonstrate an appropriate increase in English language proficiency as indicated by mastery of one English syntax objective per 20 days of instruction demonstrated on the appropriate level of the LAB.

It was impossible to evaluate the objective as stated. Instead, OREA looked for a significant gain between pre- and posttest LAB scores to determine whether students showed an increase in English proficiency.

The project provided complete LAB scores for 120 students. Overall, these students made a mean NCE gain of 6.2 (s.d.=9.7), which was statistically significant ($p<.05$). (See Table 2.) Therefore, the students showed an increase in English proficiency and met the modified objective.

Content Area Subjects

The evaluation objective for content area subjects was:

- Eighty-five percent of all targeted students will achieve a passing grade of 85 or better in the subject areas of mathematics, computer science, social studies and science as indicated by results on teacher-made final tests, using tabulation of grade results.

The objective was not achieved. Only 28.2 percent of students in the fall and 17.3 percent of students in the spring

TABLE 2

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Differences on the Language Assessment Battery, by Grade

Grade	Number of Students	Pretest Mean	Pretest S.D.	Posttest Mean	Posttest S.D.	Difference Mean	Difference S.D.	t Value
9	20	9.0	12.6	17.7	12.8	8.7	10.3	3.76*
10	28	14.7	10.6	24.0	11.9	9.3	7.0	6.98*
11	34	16.0	9.9	23.6	12.7	7.6	11.5	3.80*
12	38	16.5	13.0	18.1	11.6	1.6	7.9	1.23
All[a]	120	14.7	11.7	20.9	12.4	6.2	9.7	7.03*

[a] Data were missing or unavailable for 139 students.

- Students in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades, as well as overall, made statistically significant gains in the LAB.

achieved a grade of 85 or better in the requisite subject areas. (See Table 3.)

NONINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project proposed a single noninstructional outcome objective, in attendance.

Attendance

The evaluation objective for attendance rate was:

- The attendance rate of target students will be ten to 15 percent greater than mainstream students as indicated by school records, tabulating and comparing the percentage of attendance of program students and mainstream students.

This objective was met at Sarah J. Hale and Lafayette High Schools. At these schools, the difference between the school attendance rate and the attendance rate of program students was 18.19 and 15.01 percentage points respectively. The application of a z-test for proportions yielded, respectively, $z=2.6$ and $z=2.44$ and showed that these differences were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. At New Utrecht High School, the difference between the school attendance rate and the attendance rate of program students was only 9.59 percent, slightly short of the objective. Nevertheless, application of the z-test yielded $z=1.97$, showing that the difference was statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

TABLE 3

Passing Rates in Content Area Courses

	Fall		Spring	
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing
Mathematics	117	24.9	114	17.9
Science	90	26.0	94	16.0
Social Studies	125	37.0	127	31.0
Computer Science	47	18.9	103	10.9
Passing Rate	379	28.2	438	17.3

- Overall, only 22 percent of participating students achieved a grade of 85 or better in their content area courses.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Project GO-FOR-IT identified, selected, and served 259 gifted and talented LEP students at New Utrecht, Sarah J. Hale, and Lafayette High Schools in Brooklyn. The targeted students received E.S.L. instruction, bilingual content area classes, computer classes, and N.L.A. where appropriate. The project provided bilingual educational enrichment centers at each site and made available numerous field trips and other extracurricular activities. Students met frequently with resource coordinators. The project provided classes for the parents and adult siblings of participating students.

Project GO-FOR-IT met the objectives for E.S.L., parental involvement, and attendance. It did not meet its objectives for the content area subjects. The project failed to report sufficient data on curriculum development and staff development; therefore, OREA was unable to evaluate these objectives. Both staff and curriculum development appeared to be weaknesses of the project.

The conclusions based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- The project should consider modifying its objectives for staff and curriculum development.